

SENATE BILL 2255  
By Dixon

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, relative to elementary and secondary education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated part:

§ 49-6-8201.

(a) No later than January 1, 2005, the department of education shall establish a demonstration project for distance learning through videoconferencing for public school students. The department, in consultation with LEAs, shall select at least four (4) courses for the demonstration project. At least one (1) course shall be selected from each of the following types of courses:

(1) Courses in which shortages of highly qualified teachers exist, including high-level courses for exceptional students;

(2) Courses that some LEAs are unable to provide due to the potentially small enrollment of interested students; and

(3) Courses that are remedial and that are designed to assist students who need additional instruction in core academic subjects.

(b) The department shall solicit proposals for the development and production of the selected courses from LEAs or consortiums of LEAs and shall provide incentive grants for funding all or part of the development and production of a course.

§ 49-6-8202.

Any LEA that permits a student to enroll in a demonstration project course shall provide a classroom, any equipment necessary to permit viewing and communicating by videoconferencing with the teacher of such course and other students enrolled in the

course, and all books and materials necessary for the course. The LEA shall also provide a teacher or teacher's aide to supervise the classroom during the videoconferencing.

§ 49-6-8203.

All demonstration project courses shall be provided at times that would be within the regular school hours of participating LEAs.

§ 49-6-8204.

The department shall monitor and measure the effectiveness of the distance learning demonstration project. The department shall submit an annual report of findings and recommendations, including an assessment of the effectiveness of such demonstration project, to the house and senate education committees, and to the state board of education.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.